

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 4702

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, AR
SUBJECT: MRS. JACOBO KOVADLOFF DECLINES EMBASSY ASSISTANCE

REF: BUENOS AIRES 4679

1. SUMMARY: MRS. KOVADLOFF REPORTED TODAY THAT AFTER TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS WITH HER HUSBAND, AND SUBSEQUENT TO CONSULTATIONS WITH THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE IN NEW YORK (WHICH HAD REPORTEDLY CONTACTED DEPARTMENT), SHE DECLINED OUR OFFER TO ASSIST HER IN OBTAINING PROTECTION FROM GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA (GOA). SHE PLANS TO LEAVE ARGENTINA WITH CHILDREN JUNE 28 FOR NEW YORK. END SUMMARY

2. WHILE DRAFTING REFTTEL, CONSULTATIONS WITH EMBOFFS CLOSELY ACQUANTIED WITH OPERATIONS OF POLICE AND MILITARY SECURITY FORCES PRODUCED CONSENSUS THAT THREATS AGAINST KOVADLOFFS WOULD BE CONSIDERED IMPROPER ACTIVITY BY ANY AUTHORITY OPERATING CONSISTENT WITH ORDERS FROM JUNTA. OPERATION BORE ALL THE EARMARKS OF A PROVOCATION BY FORCES WORKING UNDER THE ORDERS OF THE FIRST CORPS COMMANDER GENERAL SUAREZ MASON OR BUENOS AIRES GOVERNOR ST. JEAN. THIS IMPRESSION WAS STRENGTHENED BY FACT THAT MINECONOMY MARTINEZ DE HOZ TOLD CHARGE JUNE 14 THAT BANNING OF CABILDO HAD BEEN IN RESPONSE TO REPRESENTATIONS
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MADE BY AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE.

3. ASSUMING THIS READING OF THE SITUATION WAS CORRECT, IT APPEARED TO US THAT IF GOA HAD CONCERN FOR STATE OF ITS RELATIONS WITH USG, MINGOVERNMENT AND OTHER ELEMENTS LOYAL TO VIDELA WOULD HAVE STRONG INTEREST IN SAFEGUARDING MRS. KOVADLOFF. CHARGE'S PLANNED APPROACH TO GEN. HARGUINDEGUY WAS TO BE BASED

ON POTENTIAL DAMAGE TO BILATERAL RELATIONS, CONSIDERING THAT THREAT WAS TO REPRESENTATIVE OF US JEWISH ORGANIZATION (SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO "YANKEE OFFICE" WAS CONTAINED IN FIRST THREAT NOTE) AND BECAUSE WE BELIEVED THAT US REQUEST FOR HER PROTECTION WOULD PROBABLY BE SEEN AS INTERVENTION.

4. MRS. KOVADLOFF RETURNED THIS MORNING AND REPORTED THAT SHE HAD CONSULTED WITH HER HUSBAND BY TELEPHONE AND WITH LOCAL FOUNDER OF AJC OFFICE. IT APPEARED THAT THERE HAD ALSO BEEN CONSULTATIONS WITH AJC IN NEW YORK, WHICH HAD DISCUSSED WITH DEPT OF STATE MATTER OF APPEAL TO THE MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT. MRS. KOVADLOFF STATED THAT IT WAS AGREED THAT SUCH AN APPEAL WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE, THAT AS ARGENTINE CITIZEN SHE WOULD BE SEEN AS SEEKING PROTECTION OF A FOREIGN POWER AND THAT BEST COURSE OF ACTION WOULD BE FOR HER TO DEPART AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

5. MRS. KOVADLOFF SAID THAT HER HUSBAND'S INTENTION NOW IS TO PROCEED ON TO WASHINGTON FROM NEW YORK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO OFFICIALLY REPORT ENTIRE MATTER TO ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR AJA ESPIL, A PERSONAL FAMILY FRIEND, IN ORDER TO DISPEL ANY IMPRESSION THAT KOVADLOFFS' DEPARTURE WAS INTENDED TO EMBARRASS OR DEMONSTRATE LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PRESENT GOVERNMENT. MRS. KOVADLOFF SAID THAT FOLLOWING HER DEPARTURE, THE EMBASSY WAS OF COURSE AT COMPLETE LIBERTY TO HANDLE MATTER IN ANY WAY DEEMED APPROPRIATE. SHE SAID KOVADLOFF WOULD KEEP CONFIDENTIAL

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DEPARTMENT INFORMED AS TO FAMILY'S PLANS AND APPROACH TO ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR. SHE ALSO SAID THAT SHE HAS RECEIVED NO NEW THREATS SINCE THOSE REPORTED IN REFTEL.

6. CHARGE TOLD HER WE WOULD BE BOUND BY HER DECISION AND NOT RAISE MATTER WITH GOA UNTIL AFTER HER DEPARTURE. HE ALSO ASKED THAT SHE CHECK IN WITH EMBASSY EVERY MORNING UNTIL SHE DEPARTS SO THAT WE MAY BE ASSURED ABOUT HER WELFARE. SHE PROMISED TO DO SO AND LEFT WITH THANKS. SHE DEPARTS WITH FAMILY FOR NEW YORK ON JUNE 28.
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